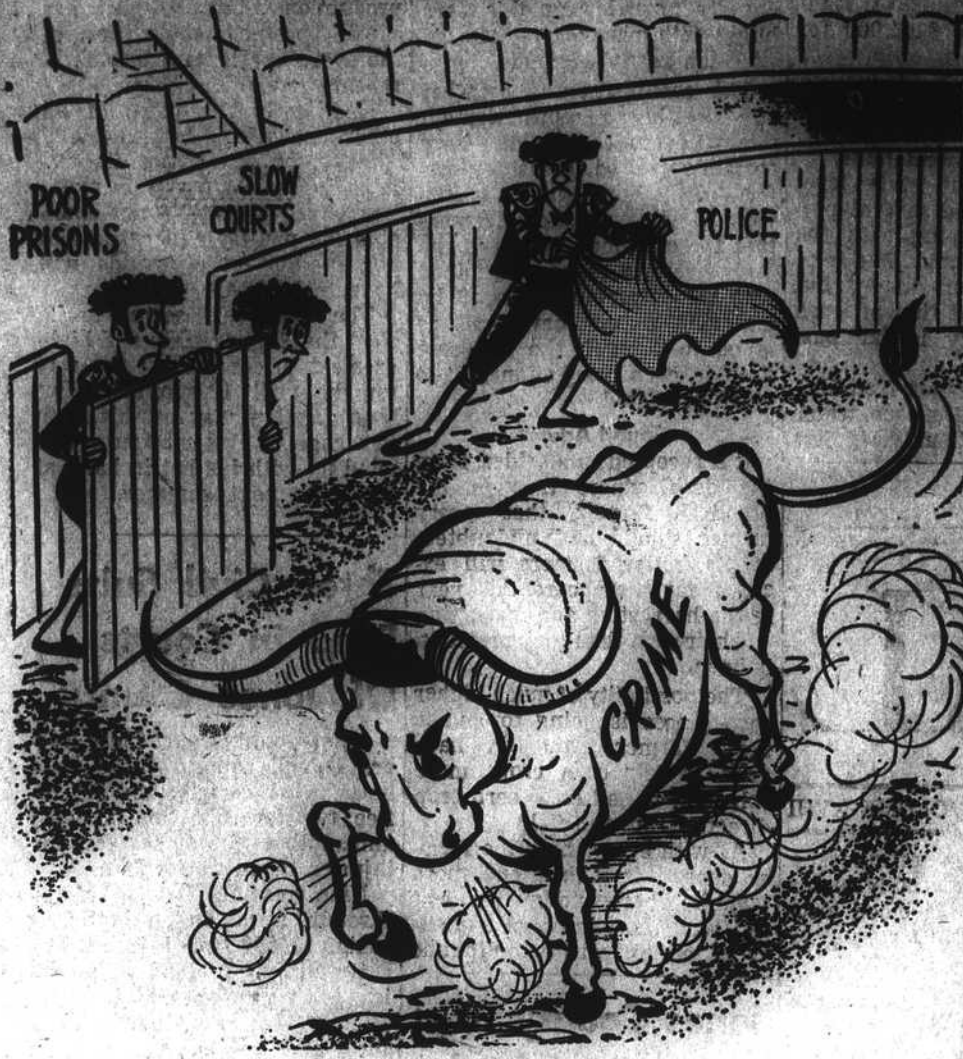


Still Pawing the Ground!



EDITORIALS

Never Forget That These Editorials Are The Opinion Of One Man And He May Be Wrong

Sad Commentary

It is a rather sad commentary on our times that many have taken hope from the news that the rate of crime has increased less in the past year than in the previous year while still showing an increase over that previous year.

Last year the rate of crime increase was about 16 per cent. This year it is put at about 11 per cent. But that 11 per cent is over the 16 per cent of last year.

This is surely not a decrease. One has to be hard put for good news to classify this as good news but many commentators in and out of government are classifying it thusly.

Good news would be a drop in the crime rate over the previous year. . . . not an increase.

Good news would be when the rate of crime increase fell below the rate of population increase. In the past 20 permissive years the rate of crime increase has been almost 100 per cent greater than the rate of population increase.

This, of course, has come at a time when there has been a national mania for not punishing those who commit crimes. More concern and far more money are being spent today on the criminal than on his victim. No one suggest that a person beaten by a mugger and robbed perhaps of his life's savings be rehabilitated, but the mugger is instantly surrounded by do-gooders who generally have access to the public treasury and also nurse a compelling desire to buy a new morality for the thug they have at hand.

The brutal rapist is given kind and gentle medical care, with hand-holding psychiatrists telling him that it was not

his fault that he committed such a brutal crime. But the poor child who was raped, if she survived, has little but cynical snickers to ease the damage to her body and mind.

On that day when a majority of the courts of this nation returns to the simple philosophy of punishing the guilty, not rewarding them; that is the certain day on which the crime rate will begin to fall. There is no substitute for punishment of the guilty to curb the low instincts of that criminal minority who prey upon society.

Cause For Concern

It is to be hoped that experts are viewing with too much concern the leaf blight that has hit the nation's corn crop this year and that the damage is not so severe as many fear.

However, it is impossible to show too much concern for the overall corn picture in our nation since corn is the absolutely fundamental basis of the affluent American society today.

True, corn only comprises about five per cent of the total farm sales in an average year but the things that corn produces are a percentage of considerable different flavor: Hogs 10.9 per cent of total farm income, cattle and calves 7.3 per cent, dairy products 7 per cent, poultry and eggs 22.7 per cent, which added to the five per cent corn represents comes to about 53 per cent of total farm income in an average year.

So it does not take a certified agronomist to understand the magnitude of any peril that threatens any considerable portion of this most basic crop of corn. And this doesn't even take into consideration those who may have a taste

Quiet Revolution

Every revolution does not involve bombs and bloodshed and Eastern North Carolina has passed through one of these quiet revolutions in the past 20 years and those of us who have lived through it have hardly noticed it.

Like every revolution, however, it has hurt some people but it has helped and will help many more.

This is the agricultural revolution which has seen tobacco unseated as the undisputed champion of the Eastern North Carolina Farm Economy. Today meat reigns supreme with the combined income from hogs, beef cattle, poultry, eggs and milk considerably higher than from one-time King Nicotine.

This farm revolution has seen thousands of field hands displaced, leaving empty houses on nearly every farm and crowded shums in nearly every town big enough to have pretensions of being a city.

This has been costly in human factors, costing these displaced white and colored farm families their long-cherished way of life; which in most instances was not much above a scant existence. And now it is costing those who were not so unfortunate in vastly expanded welfare costs, and there is no early end in sight to this pair of price tags worn by this farm revolution.

But on the plus side the overall farm economy is much better than when all the hopes and fears of the farmer and those he supported were tied to that single slender tobacco twine.

Today farm income is spread over the entire year instead of a few hectic weeks in late summer and early fall, and this has raised not only the economic well-being of the farmer but has changed his cultural practices — some to the bad but most to the good.

The tobacco hand who feasted for a brief few weeks at selling time and "famed" the majority of the year was a burden to himself and the community since by force of circumstance he could be nothing more than a pessimist.

The meat economy is no bed of roses either but beside the tobacco hand the meat farmer is so much better off that comparisons seem trite and almost impossible.

for bourbon whisky, which also owes a lot of its potent potability to this same crop.

And there is one further consideration that some city dwellers and their elected representatives ought to derive from this situation: That spending less than one per cent of the gross national product to stabilize the overall farm economy is a very low price for insurance of the high-on-the-hog eating habits of Americans.

It is a chilling consideration to note that there is less than a one year supply on hand of any of the most basic farm commodities in our nation. Yet there are still many who support the stockpiling of endless years of materials for military usage and preach loudly how ridiculous it is to support the same principle for even the most basic of military supplies; which, of course, is food.

But then the farm constituency is not so big or powerful as the labor unions and the great industrial complexes of our nation. A country — like an Army — still travels on its stomach.

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PERSONAL PARAGRAPHS

BY JACK RIDER

The American system undoubtedly is the most paradoxical of all the systems ever hastily glued together for the government of people. There are other countries who have copied our constitution and even a few have thundered into being on the rhetoric of a "Declaration of Independence" borrowed from Thomas Jefferson and his editors of 1776.

But so far none has been able to duplicate the American System. And none is ever likely to copy it because it is people, not rules and regulations that make a system what it is, or is not.

This reflection comes to me from editing the article from the "Atlanta" magazine this week about Kinston's Felix Harvey, a man who is the chief executive officer of a billion dollar corporation in Atlanta, still chief executive officer of numerous large — but not-so-large-as-Atlanta — local business. And yet Felix has found the time and the intellectual curiosity to deeply involve himself in the once-mundane affairs of the Kinston School Board, and more recently in the bitter political struggle that has crept into our educational process.

Perhaps there are other countries where men equally as busy and comparably as important as Harvey do sit themselves down to the minor problems of their community when they could just as easily stand aloof and let those community problems stew in their own juices.

But Harvey has a deep sense of concern about the community in which he and his family have lived and prospered these many generations, so he takes the time between Atlanta and London and Amsterdam to make every effort to do what he can to keep the schools a working public organism.

And this involvement becomes even more unique when one stands aside and considers that Harvey has been voted down on every single important issue that has come before the board in the past year.

One can appreciate the very busy and very important personage taking the time to "run" a local governmental unit, but with Harvey's recent track record his is merely a voice of opposition to some of the foolish things he feels his colleagues on the school board are unnecessarily engaging in. A lesser man would have turned in his badge long ago and left the school problems to those more inclined to the lock-step of modern conformity.

You see, it takes unique men and women to create a unique system of government and the first requisite of this uniqueness is having the courage to stand and fight for what one believes to be right, even when he's being beaten every day in every skirmish. It's easy to be a winner. And Harvey very largely is a winner by every yardstick people are generally measured by but he is a political loser with an alarmingly poor record, yet he still involves himself and fights for what he believes to be right.